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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AID-05 EB-08 SES-02 SAA-01 TRSE-00 /080 W
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R 090745Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9476
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, US, AF, PK
SUBJECT: FRONTIER AFFAIRS MINISTER TAHZEEB TAKES FAIRLY MODERATE STANCE DURING AMBASSADOR'S INITIAL CALL

1. SUMMARY. I MADE MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL AUGUST 8 ON MINISTER OF FRONTIER AFFAIRS NEZAMUDDIN TAHZEEB. DESPITE HIS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR "PROTECTING" THE INTERESTS OF THE PUSHTUN AND BALUCH TRIBESMEN ON THE PAKISTANI SIDE OF THE DURAND LINE, TAHZEEB MADE NO RADICAL STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE CURRENT STATE OF AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS NOR ON THE FUTURE OF POSSIBLE "NEGOTIATIONS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES OVER THE PUSHTUNISTAN ISSUE. IN FACT, TAHZEEB APPEARED TO TAKE A MORE MODERATE LINE TOWARD PAKISTAN THAN DID FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN IN HIS BELGRADE SPEECH, AND DEFENSE MINISTER QADER DURING MY INITIAL CALL ON HIM. END OF SUMMARY.

2. I RAISED THE SUBSTANCE OF THE AUGUST 1 TASS/ PRAVDA ARTICLE WITH TAHZEEB AND REPEATED OUR POSITION
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THAT THE ARTICLE HAD NO FACTUAL BASIS WHATSOEVER. I STRESSED THAT U.S. POLICY IS TO ASSIST AFGHANISTAN IN ITS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THAT WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF INTERFERING LK THIS COUNTRY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS IN ANY MANNER. TAHZEEB APPEARED UNINFORMED ON THE ARTICLE ITSELF, AND HE ECHOED DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST'S VIEW THAT THE ISSUE

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SEEMED TO BE A MATTER BETWEEN THE U. S. AND USSR.
HE INSISTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAD
PROVIDED NO INFORMATION WHICH COULD HAVE SERVED AS A
BASIS FOR THE STORY.

3. AS FOR OTHERS WHO MIGHT BE SUPPORTING OPPOSITION
ACTIVITIES, TAHZEEB CLAIMED THAT PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR
ALI ARSHAD HAD "ADMITTED" IN A RECENT CONVERSATION
THAT THERE ARE NUMEROUS AREAS ALONG THE FROINTIER
THROUGH WHICH PEOPLE AND ARMS FREELY PASS. TAHZEEB
SAID HE DID NOT ASK ARSHAD WHY THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT
COULD OR WOULD NOT TIGHTEN ITS CONTROL OVER THESE AREAS
ALONG THE BORDER, BUT TAHZEEB IMPLIED THAT HE BELIEVED
THE PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES SIMPLY DID NOT EXERCISE
COMPLETE JURISDICTION OVER THESE REGIONS.

4. IN RESPONSE TO MY DIRECT QUESTION REGARDING WHAT
THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT MEANT WHEN IT SPOKE OF A "NATIONAL
DESTINY" FOR THE PUSHTUN AND BALUCH PEOPLE, TAHZEEB
DODGED THE ISSUE AND REPEATED THE STANDARD POSITION THAT
THE DURAND LINE WAS AN "IMPOSED" FRONTIER WHICH HAD NEVER BEEN
RECOGNIZED BY ANY AFGHAN GOVERNMENT. HE ADDED THAT
THE NEW REGIME IN KABUL WAS READY "AT ANY TIME"
TO UNDERTAKE "NEGOTIATIONS" WITH THE PAKISTANI
GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THE PUSHTUNISTAN

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QUESTION.

5. COMMENT: TAHZEEB'S REMARKS WERE GENERALLY
MODERATE, AND HE MADE NO RADICAL STATEMENTS SIMILAR
TO HIS PREVIOUSLY-REPORTED ASSERTION THAT THE AFGHAN-
PAK BORDER SHOULD BE ON THE INDUS RIVER. INTERESTINGLY,
HIS VIEWS DID NOT REFLECT THE HARDER AFGHAN APPROACH
TOWARD PAKISTAN TAKEN RECENTLY BY DEFENSE MINISTER
QADER AND FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN. CONCEIVABLY, TAHZEEB
MAY HAVE BEEN TOLD BY AMIN THAT FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INCLUDING
RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN, DO NOT FALL WITHIN THE PURVIEW
OF TAHZEEB'S MINISTRY, AND THAT AMIN IS THE APPROPRIATE
SPOKESMAN FOR AFGHAN FOREIGN POLICY.
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